

**REPORT ON LIBRARIES TOUR IN GERMANY  
23<sup>RD</sup> – 28<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2011**

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&  
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## **1.0 Introduction**

This is a report of our study tour in Germany from 23<sup>rd</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> October 2011. The tour was co-sponsored by Bibliothek & Information International, the Goethe-Institut Nairobi and the Ministry of State for National Heritage and Culture in Kenya. We are grateful to Mr. Eliphias Nyamogo of Goethe Institute Kenya and Ms. Regine Friederici of Berlin, Germany for coordinating the entire activity for us.

The study tour entailed visiting various institutions that are in one way or another involved with library and information services in Germany. It was necessitated by the enactment of a new constitution in Kenya in 2010. The constitution introduced fundamental changes in the structure of government in Kenya. One of these changes is the introduction of a devolved system of government. This system created both the National and County governments. Library and information services were one of the affected sectors as the constitution designates it as a function of the county governments. Prior to this, library and information services in Kenya were administered by the central government with the Kenya National Libraries Board Act, Cap 225 being the main legal framework for libraries. It was therefore deemed necessary to give Kenyan library and information services policy makers insight into how the service is administered in a devolved system of government. Germany was chosen because its federal system of government is similar to Kenya's devolved system of government.

We (Stephen Mau and Dr. Jacob Miaron) arrived in Tegel Airport, Berlin via Amsterdam on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2011 and joined our colleague Betty Kalugho who had travelled earlier on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> of October. We were met at the airport by our able coordinator Ms. Regine Friederici and some staff from the Kenyan embassy in Berlin. We were driven to the Hotel NH Friedrichstrasse where we were to stay throughout our study tour.

The Kenyan Delegation comprised of Dr. Jacob Ole Miaron – Permanent Secretary, Head of Delegation, Mr. Stephen Mau, Department of Library Services and Ms. Betty Kalugho - Kenya National Library Services. We were accompanied throughout the tour Ms. Friederici and we visited several libraries and held meetings with various persons in the library sector.



*Kenyan Delegation, (Right to Left), Dr Ole Miaron, Ms Kalugho and Mr. Mau, in Bremen.*

## **2.0 Anton-Saefkow Library, Berlin Lichtenberg – 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2011**

On Monday 24<sup>th</sup> October, we visited Anton-Saefkow Library, Berlin. This visit coincided with the ceremony for the award of the Germany Library of the Year Award. We were invited to attend the ceremony and meet Prof. Dr. Claudia Lux, Director General of the Central and Regional Library, Berlin, Ms. Monika Ziller the Director of Public Library Heilbronn and Chairman of the Germany Library Association and Ms. Barbara Schleihagen the Secretary of German Library Association.

### **2.1 Library of the Year Award**

Anton-Saefkow library was being awarded for its standing social work and service to immigrant community. It has a substantial collection in Russian and has a full time member of staff dedicated to serving the immigrant Russian community. It also has a programme for seniors, partnership with local schools and reading programmes for children from an early age.

We were able to draw comparisons between the Germany Library of the Year Award and the Kenyan one (Maktaba Awards). The two are quite similar given the fact that the Kenyan one is modeled along the German one with the Goethe-Institut Nairobi playing a leading role.

We were conducted to a tour of Anton Saefkow Public Library before the award ceremony commenced. We were impressed by how the library is organized, particularly its Russian collection that contributed to its being recognized as the library of the year.

### **2.2 Meeting with Dr. Lux**

Our meeting with Dr. Lux focused on Library situation in both countries. Our leader of delegation, Dr. Ole Miaron gave a brief on the situation in Kenya particularly the challenge posed by the constitutional requirement that library services be devolved. Dr. Lux gave an overview of the situation in Germany and analogies from other European Union countries.

### **2.3 Meeting with German Library Association Officials**

On the same day, after the award ceremony, we held a meeting with Ms Barbara Schleihagen and Ms Monika Ziller in Berlin-Lichtenberg. Ms Schleihagen is the secretary of the German Library Association and Ms Ziller is Director Public Library Heilbronn and Chairperson of German Library Association. The meeting discussed the library situation in Kenya and

Germany focusing on the challenges facing the service and library professionals. The German Library Association officials acknowledged it was challenging to develop Library and Information services without the necessary legislation.



*A staff of Anton-Saekow public library (centre) explains a point to Ms Regine and Dr. Ole Miaron*

### **3.0 German National Library – Leipzig – 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2011**

On Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October we left our hotel quite early and headed to the central station. We were now getting accustomed to the chilly winter weather that was slowly setting in. Regine, our tour coordinator had warned us that we had to leave early because Leipzig was a bit far from Berlin.

When we arrived at Leipzig and took the short walk to the Deutsche National Bibliothek (DNB) we were amazed by the size of its complex. This is the largest branch of the German National Library. We were met by Dr. Frieder Schmidt, Deputy Head of Department of Deutesches Buch- und Schriftmuseum (German Book and Script Museum) who spent the whole day with us.

During our deliberations with Dr. Schmidt we learnt that the DNB started as a Private- Public partnership in 1912. The main movers behind its establishment were the book traders based at Leipzig. These book traders wanted a library that could collect their publications. Following the division of Germany into East and West Germany, the Deutsche Bibliothek in Frankfurt was created to serve the then West Germany in 1947. However following the re-unification of Germany in 1990, the two were amalgamated.

Currently the DNB has two branches one in Leipzig and another in Frankfurt. The Leipzig branch is considered a National monument and it has among its collection parliamentary proceedings dating 1848.

The DNB is established by a federal law that makes it a function of the federal government. The law mandates it to collect all media for purposes of compilation of the national bibliography and preservation for posterity. It collects two copies of each media item produced in Germany or outside Germany but on Germany. Publishers are compelled by law to deposit the

two copies with the DNB. An amendment of the legal deposit law in 2006 has enabled it to collect e-resources.

The DNB has a collection of 26 million media units – 16 million in Leipzig and 10 million in Frankfurt. It collects approximately 750,000 media units annually. These comprise of books, journals, electronic resources, music CDs, films etc. It has a total of 380km of shelf boards' i.e. 230 in Leipzig and 150km in Frankfurt

It also serves as the German National Archives and Book Museum. The national archives have 100,000 theses in digital format. As a book museum, it exhibits artifacts on the development of publishing in Germany and also some of the oldest books.

DNB also produces the National Catalogue. It has a Department of Standardization that produces the catalogue. It also has a database for all systems. It collects these periodicals in electronic form.

Although the DNB is the federal national legal depository centre, each of the nineteen 16 states of Germany has a state library that serves as the legal depository library for the particular state.



*A Computer lab at the German National Library Leipzig*

The DNB also undertakes research. It has a total of 720 members of staff. In addition it takes on board six apprentices every year in each of its two branches, two of who learn book binding. Out of the 720 staff only 600 are on permanent terms while the rest are volunteers.

The DNB has an annual budget of 44 million Euros (4.4 Billion Kenya Shillings). 70% of this goes to recurrent expenditure. It is fully funded by the federal government. However it raises income from fees paid by users and researchers. Users pay 5 Euros per day, 15 Euros per month or 38 Euros p.a. It also gets income from reprographic services, title searches fees and sale of data records.

Later on we were conducted through a tour of the library that covered the Book Museum, the music archives and expansive exhibition area. We had an opportunity to view some of the

oldest books and printing equipment including Gutenberg's printing press. In the music archives we were very excited to see a book on Kenyan Music.

As we learnt about the operations of the National library, its mandate and the law that established it, we could see the wide disparity between the DNB and the Kenya National Library. For example while the legislative framework for the DNB gives it a clear mandate to collect electronic materials the KNLS Act restricts it to publications only.

#### **4.0 State Department of Archives and Public Libraries in Brandenburg – 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2011**

On Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October in the morning we visited the State Department of Archives and Public Libraries in Brandenburg. This department is under the Directorate of Culture and Education of the State of Brandenburg (Potsdam). The federal state of Brandenburg established the department to comply with a constitutional provision guaranteeing access to information. Brandenburg (Potsdam) as a state has a population of 2.5 million people and a population density of 36 per sq km. It is divided into four districts.

The department's staff took us through its operations, its staff structure, its functions and generally the state of Library and Information services in Potsdam.

Its duties are to:-

- Act as a think tank for public libraries in the state.
- Map out new programmes and strategies for libraries.
- Develop solutions for challenges facing Libraries.
- Develop library networks.
- Set standards for libraries in regard to ICT services etc.
- Coordinate public libraries development.
- Ensure continuous development of libraries and advice the state and all libraries on all matters related to library services.

The public library service in the state is categorized as follows:-

##### **i. Professional Public Libraries**

These are public libraries run by professional librarians. Each of them must have one or more professional librarians. There are one hundred and forty (140) such libraries in the state and they account for 96% of the Public library services. These libraries have at least 20 opening hours per week.

##### **ii. Voluntary Public libraries**

These are public libraries that are run by volunteers. They account for 4% of the service.

##### **iii. Library buses**

The state has 5 library buses that move around offering library services. Together these buses make about 529 stops serving people.

Each district of the state has between 10–12 public libraries. These include libraries that are either Professional public libraries or voluntary public libraries.

However for effective running of Library services each district has one Library centre. The library centre serves as the central district public library.

### **Functions of the District library centre are to:-**

- i. Provide materials on special topics to small libraries.
- ii. Ensure materials that are rare, rotate among the small libraries.
- iii. Organize various library and literacy events e.g. rainbow of literature.
- iv. Coordinate projects for small libraries.
- v. Coordinate school media programmes.

The Department of archives and Public libraries has four (4) members of staff. Each of them is a professional in their own respect in the field of library and information services. For effective operation, each of these members is assigned a certain geographical area to take care off in addition to assisting the whole state in their field of specialization. Towards this end, the state is divided into four regions with each member of staff being assigned a region.

The specific duties undertaken by these members of staff are to:-

- Advise library and information service policy makers.
- Advise library practitioners on library information matters.
- Provide information to library information stakeholders.
- Link policy makers with the service.
- Advise on library related projects e.g. buildings, networking e.t.c.
- Promotion of library services.
- Develop strategic plans for libraries.
- Ensure collaboration and networking among libraries.
- Coordinate Library staff training.
- Provide expertise in regard to staffing levels.

The Department of Archives and Public Libraries falls under the Brandenburg state Ministry of Research, Education and Culture. In regard to library services, the role of the Ministry is to:-

- Approve and ensure implementation of library development plans.
- Ensure collaboration between public libraries and all other libraries.
- Initiate common development programs in all libraries.
- Oversee apprenticeship program for library assistants i.e. training and capacity development of librarians.

In addition, the Department of Archives and Public libraries runs a subject related special library. The library specializes on library information science and its objective is to assist librarians enhance their competences. The library has about 500 books and subscribes to 25 magazines. It also has a website and produces a monthly newsletter. However we were not able to tour the library.

We were impressed by the lean staff establishment of the department and the responsibility entrusted on them. They observed that despite the State's small size and population, it had an elaborate public library network.

### **5.0 Department of Culture, State of Berlin – 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2011**

In the afternoon we went back to Berlin and visited the Department of Culture, State of Berlin This department is State of Berlin government's arm responsible for Libraries, Museums and Archives. We held a meeting with Herr Beiger, Head of Department and Christine Bierend. They explained to us how the public libraries section operates and the general library situation in the State of Berlin.

Public libraries in the state of Berlin are categorized into state and district libraries. The central state library is funded by the Berlin state government. It is organized as a foundation. It produces the state's union catalogue.

District libraries are funded by the public. In the state of Berlin that has twelve (12) districts, there are eighty (80) district libraries. Each district is responsible for its own libraries. However, each district gets a budgetary allocation for library services from the state government. Although each district is left to decide on its own how to utilize the money allocated, the state government through the Department of Culture gives guidelines on expenditure.

The public libraries section in the department of culture is responsible for guidelines and standards for public libraries. It also formulates library development plans.

All the public libraries in the state of Berlin operate as a network. A member holding a library card can access all services from any library.

The state government finances and coordinates training for Librarians, provision of computers, connectivity i.e. Internet and infrastructure development.

## 6.0 Bremen Public Library – 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2011



*(L to R) Ms. Betty Kalugho, Dr. Ole Miaron, Mrs. Friederici and Mrs. Lison pose with "Kessi"*

On Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October we took another long train journey to Bremen via Munich. We were eager to see the city of Bremen because of the famous story on the four musicians from Bremen. In this state we visited the Bremen Public Library. The library serves as the state's central and depository library. In this library we were met by Ms Barbara Lison, Director General, Mr. Christian Kuhlmann and Mr. G. Schwartzner, in charge of Children's section.

The Bremen State Library was established in 1992 by a Charter of the Bremen state government. The motto of the library is "Small but powerful".

The library network in Bremen consists of:-

- 1 Central library.
- 7 Branches.
- 1 Mobile library with 21 stops.
- 1 Prison library.

It is run as a public enterprise. The basic idea behind the public enterprise is to have the organizational and financial responsibility delegated to the body charged with a function in order to enable it fulfill its mission. It aims at minimizing external interference on the daily work of the organization. Public enterprise model lays emphasis on the output. Based on the desired output, funds are allocated but the organization is left free to utilize the funds the way it deems best.

As a public enterprise, the Bremen central library is responsible to the state parliament through the state Secretary of Culture. The library is headed by the Director General who is in charge of the day to day running of the library. However there is an Advisory Board that is charged with the overall economic governance of the library i.e. budget plan, annual results, contracts between library and the Culture Secretary. It also handles issues such as decisions on schedules of fees, terms and conditions of usage, changes in the library network of branches and matters in personnel regarding the CEO. The Board meets quarterly. The library is financed by the state government. Other funds come from users' fees and income generating activities such as books auctions.

We were conducted to a tour of the library by Ms Lison and her colleagues. We were particularly impressed by the library's Children's Section and its efforts to encourage children from the earliest age possible to use the library. We were impressed by the children's Section symbol named "Kessi"

The library has gone out of its way to create conducive atmosphere for children and encourages parents to induct their children into reading from when they are infants.

### **7.0 Berlin State Library – Prussian Cultural Heritage – 28<sup>th</sup> October, 2011**

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October was the last day of our tour. We visited the Berlin State Library – Prussian Cultural Heritage. This library ranks among some of the oldest libraries in the world. It has been in existence for 350 years having been established in 1661. It also holds some of the world's oldest publications among them the Gutenberg Bible and Mozart's handwritten manuscripts.

The library specializes in academic research being used more by researchers. It boasts of having in stock some of the world's oldest publications and manuscripts. It has in its stock the Gutenberg Bible – the first ever published book following the invention of the printing press and Mozart's handwritten manuscripts. It is housed in two buildings and has a total collection of eleven million (11,000,000) media units.

We were conducted to a tour of the library and later on held a meeting with Dr. Jochem Haug and Mr. Armin Talke. Mr. Talke who is a legal consultant in library and information service shared with us insights into the legal framework for libraries in Germany and other European Union countries. The meeting dwelt on the importance of a national library law, issues that such a law can address and how Kenya can formulate such law.

Mr. Talke informed us that a National Library law is important in a devolved system so as to:-

- Compel states/counties to build and support libraries to guarantee access to information to all.
- Enable citizens realize their fundamental right of access to information.
- Provide for finances for the library services.
- Ensure standards in the library and information service.

It was noted that there also exist model national library legislations from International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).

The meeting discussed the possible ways forward for Kenya in formulating the national law on libraries. Mr. Talke advised that Kenya can consult IFLA through the local library association (KLA). He also expressed his willingness to assist.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

We had a fruitful tour and learnt many important things. The experience gained from the tour will be applied while charting the way forward for Library and Information services in Kenya.

From the library situation in Germany, the following lessons can be drawn:-

1. For the National Library to effectively exercise its mandate, it has to be completely detached from the public library service. The German National Library, with its two branches, has no control over and does not run any public libraries.
2. In order to have effective public library service, there is need to have in place, a lean administrative body to plan and oversee implementation of programmes, advice on technical issues and enhance standards. The Department of Archives and Public libraries in Brandenburg and the Advisory Board at the Bremen Central Library are good examples.
3. It is also advisable to have a Ministry to take charge of major projects within the library information service, set and enforce standards and also link the service with the political class. The Brandenburg state Ministry of Research, Education and Culture and the Berlin State Department of Culture are good examples.
4. Funding is always a major challenge to libraries. Libraries require funds to acquire materials and enhance their services. The foundation model of the Berlin Central Library, the public enterprise model for Bremen Central library and the book auctions in both libraries are lessons Kenyan libraries can emulate.
5. Although there is no national library law, libraries in Germany have a very strong cultural tradition to rely on. Unfortunately Kenya does not have such a tradition.

## **9.0 Acknowledgement**

We wish to acknowledge with sincere gratitude all those people and Institutions that contributed to make the study tour a success. Special thanks go to Bibliothek & Information International and the Goethe-Institut Kenya for organizing the tour. We thank in particular the Director of Goethe-Institut Kenya and Mr. Eliphaz Nyamogo, the head Library and Information services, Goethe-Institut Kenya for their personal efforts in organizing the tour.

We also wish to thank the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of State for National heritage and Culture for facilitating the study tour and leading the Kenyan delegation to Berlin.

Other thanks go to all those who we met and those who conducted us to tours in their libraries. These include Prof. Dr. Claudia Lux, Director Berlin Central and Regional Library; Ms Monika Ziller, Director of Public Library Heilbronn and Chairman Germany Library Association, Ms Barbara Schleihagen, Secretary Germany Library Association; Dr. Frieder Schmidt of Germany National Library Leipzig, staff at the Brandenburg state Department of Archives and Culture; Uwe Schwersky and colleagues of Department of Culture of within the State of Berlin; Ms Barbara Lison, Director General of Bremen State library, Mr. Christian Kuhlmann and Mr. G. Schwartzner of Bremen State library; Dr. Jochen Haug and Mr. Armin Talke of Berlin state library.

Last but not least, we express our warm and sincere thanks to Mrs. Regine Friederici who was our tour coordinator and who not only guided us through the programme and accompanied us to all the places we visited but also ensured that our stay in Berlin was comfortable.